

A NEW WORD ON AN OLD SUBJECT.

There has just been issued from the press of the Revells a volume from the pen of one of our most gifted pastors, entitled "The Prophets, From Elijah to Christ." The author is the pastor of the First Presbyterian church of Columbia, S. C., Rev. Andrew W. Blackwood, D. D. The book brings a new and notable message on an old subject. In it Dr. Blackwood shows that he is as gifted with the pen as he is on the platform. It is a compelling book; one that we dislike to put down when we have taken it up. To most of us the mere mention of the prophets, major or minor, induces sleepiness. Not so with this presentation of the subject. Not only is the style attractive in a peculiar degree, but the mastery of the subject is so apparent that it lends new hope to the would-be student of Old Testament Prophecy. It is lamentable the amount of inattention given to the study of the prophets. Few Sunday-school teachers but have groaned in spirit when it is announced that the studies of the next six months will be in this part of the Bible. Few pastors give careful and refreshing study to this part of the Bible, and fly to it only when a spasm of reform flits over their souls. Then a few isolated texts that skim down like swallows into the air to find a fly, attract their attention and issue forth into a sermon of more or less drowsiness.

Dr. Blackwood, if he has done no other service, has shown us that the most intensely modern and therefore interesting portion of the Bible is just here in the much avoided books.

History repeats itself. The history of Israel and Judah is just the history of every nation that forgets God and its high calling. Whether that nation be Germany, England or America. There are modern prophets that are pointing these great nations to some of the dangers in national life, but none so vividly as Isaiah and Hosea and Micah and Malachi pointed out the dangers to these old kingdoms.

We may learn everything from these men who spake as they were taught by the infallible Spirit. Their burning sentences are applicable to our modern conditions, especially at this time. The lurid light of the present lends a graphic glow to the world of to-day. Herein lies the power of these messages to the men of our times.

It is not necessary to describe the book of Dr. Blackwood. It is readable, and better still, understandable by all minds. It originated doubtless in the faithful effort of a wide-awake pastor to inform an intelligent congregation of the bearing of God's word on present-day conditions. Therefore, it is not technical, nor critical. The ability of the author is seen in the simplicity and clearness and skill with which he tells the message of the prophets to us, rather than to his contemporaries.

The insistent conclusion of all the prophets is that "righteousness exalteth a nation," and that nothing else will save it. All nations die from within. It is impossible to kill a righteous people. This note rings through and through the messages. We are hearing echoes of this word from some of our prophets of to-day. The pulpit may well ring with this word. The very best service the minister can give his country to-day is to insist on this as our salvation. It is well to unfurl the flag and sing "The Star-Spangled Banner," but what will win the war and save the ideals of liberty for the world will be a righteous national life.

The immediate conclusion from this is that we need as a nation to repent of our sins and turn consciously and humbly to God. This is the bitter medicine that taken into our body

will make healthy the whole man. The truest modern prophet is the one who dwells on the sins of the nation rather than its glories.

Such faithful teaching may bring just the same results as in the case of Isaiah and Jeremiah—contempt and even the charge of disloyalty. Men or nations do not like the truth when it runs counter to their sins. Blessed is the nation that has a faithful ministry.

Then, too, the greatest of all teaching of the mighty men of God was that peace and gladness and the full development of man and nations could only come when the kingdom was dominant and the King would come. How strangely alike is the voice of some of the modern prophets, like H. G. Wells, prophesying this very truth.

So the long ages bring us back to the same starting point, that this is God's world, and it can never be at peace till He reigns over in truth and in reality.

Contributed

THE RAINBOW.

By Thomas E. Cobbs.

The bow of Mercy spans the judgment seat,
Its arch in the heavens, on earth its feet,
It tints earth and sky with its golden hues,
And the promise of saving grace renews.
Beneath the arch, extending high above,
Radiant with beauty, beaming with love,
Gentle Mercy and rigid Justice meet,
And Righteousness and Peace each other greet.
August tribunal! Around them cluster
Virtues that heaven only can muster.
From wisdom's realm and havens of bliss,
They come to retrieve mankind led amiss,
Free, immaculate grace to glorify,
And a marvelous cause to hear and try.
The court convenes. The trial is begun.
The case called—Grace versus the Evil One.

Satan with blandishments and suasive smiles,
His subtle cunning and his wicked wiles,
Heaven's holy tribunal dares not face,
But skulks and slinks off to his lurking place.
To prosecute and meet all just demands,
Grace commits her cause to Mercy's hands.
Mercy, with wisdom and skill most discreet,
Pays the claims, and the conditions to meet
For the sinner, charged with sin's pollution,
Files a plea of guilt with absolution.
The assembled host watch with grave concern
To see how the scales of justice will turn.
Will the sinner be eternally flayed?
Or the hand of justice forever stayed?

Justice himself on the judicial throne,
Hears Mercy's vicarious plea alone;
And bids the guilty sinner homeward go,
Live in exalting peace and sin no more.
And Righteousness, from heaven coming down
Seals the royal edict with Mercy's crown,
And proclaims, wherever sinners are found,
Free and immaculate grace doth abound.
The angels receive it with glad acclaim,
And sing praises to the Redeemer's name.
In singing they halt, and with joy exclaim:
Behold, yonder sinner is born again!
Divine peace, like the brooding mother dove,
Hovers the convert with motherly love;
And to quell his fears, and comfort impart,
Spreads her mantle over his quaking heart,
And then bids him, happy with his release,
Abide in love and walk in paths of peace.

The golden bow, with its silent refrain,
Exhorts poor fallen man to rise again,
And with its colors of every hue,
Prismatically arranged, always true,
On a background with a roseate flush,
With a hidden hand and a hairless brush,
Grandly illustrates a faithful story
Of a merciful God and His glory.

These brilliant bows heaven's bosom adorn,
Types of mankind at resurrection's morn.
Like man they come and fade and pass away,
To come again at the appointed day,
When each will with peculiar glory shine,
Renewed and restored by power divine.

Martinsville, Va.

IS THE "SATANIC MAN" YET TO COME?

By Rev. J. E. L. Winecoff.

In the Presbyterian of the South, June 13, 1917, Rev. A. W. Pitzer, D. D., writes under the caption of "The Satanic Man," and identifies him with "the man of sin," "the son of perdition," the "Final anti-Christ," etc., described in 2 Thes. 2:3-10. So far, so good. But he says, "This Satanic Man can not be located in the past; he does not belong to the past, but to the future. He is yet to come," which is not so good.

The Confession of Faith says he has been located, chap. 25, sec. 6: "There is no head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor can the pope of Rome in any sense be the head thereof; but is that anti-Christ, that man of sin and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God." Which is right?

Dr. Pitzer enumerates the marks of the Satanic Man as "(a) The son of perdition; (b) the lawless one, (c) the man of sin, (d) exalts himself against God, (e) seats himself in the temple of God, (f) has a Satanic power to work signs and wonders." But he left out one of the most important marks, which is (v. 4), "Shows himself that he is God"—R. V., "Sets forth himself as God," or takes the place of God on earth. Has not the papacy, or the hierarchy, including the popes, cardinals, bishops, and priests, collectively, borne all these marks very plainly? In claiming to be in the place of God, with the right of universal dominion and authority to bind and loose, arbitrarily, upon earth, in heaven and hell, does not the papacy "show himself as God" and "exalt himself above all that is called God"? In claiming the headship of the Church, in the place of Christ, does he not "sit in the temple of God"? In suppressing truth, setting aside the laws of God and men, to further his own projects of ambition, burning Bibles, killing people by the thousands for reading the Bible, intriguing and instigating wars between nations and nations, has not the papacy been "the lawless one," "the wicked one," "the man of sin," the chief of sinners? And if the papacy has done all this, is he not "the son of perdition," the offspring of perdition, begotten of the spirit of the evil one, and doomed to perdition "whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming"?

As for the "Satanic power to work signs and wonders," or as the Scripture says, v. 9, "After the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders," the papacy has used "signs and lying wonders" most effectively; and its power in the world over the minds and conscience of people and national and international affairs, has been nothing less than miraculous (satanically so, if you please), astounding, yes dumb-founding, or any other intensified adjective you can think of using.

The confusion that is in the minds of some, about this Satanic Man, is that they are looking for him in some powerful, satanically endowed person, who sets himself up as an avowed opponent of Christ and all that is called God. They would never think of looking for him in a man who wears the name of Christ and is called holy or "Holiness." But that is the very kind of man in whom he was to be found. He was to be revealed "sitting in the temple of God," and coming "after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders." And how does Satan work? According to 2 Cor. 11:13-15, like "an angel of light," with "false apostles, and deceitful workers, transforming themselves into